

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Ryo Xiong, D.O.B. 11-10-73, of Stevens Point, Wisconsin, was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge John C. Shabaz to 2 years probation and a \$2,500 fine for conspiracy to import a protected species, a Harris Hawk, without a valid permit . Xiong pleaded guilty to this charge on July 17, 2006.

On December 5, 2005, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Inspectors at O'Hare Airport in Chicago, Illinois, intercepted a package from Great Britain containing a mounted Harris Hawk addressed to the defendant. The Harris Hawk is a protected species as indicated in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

After being questioned, Xiong admitted to purchasing the prohibited bird and importing it into the United States without a valid permit. Xiong had previously unlawfully imported a red-tailed hawk and was warned of the federal laws covering the importation of protected wildlife.

The charge against Xiong was the result of an investigation conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney David J. Reinhard .

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